

HB 329 Commission on Universal Health Care
House Health and Government Operations Committee
Testimony Position: Favorable
March 13, 2023

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

My name is Stephanie S. Gregory, a resident of Baltimore, and a volunteer with The Maryland Poor Peoples' Campaign (MDPPC). MDPPC is a non-partisan coalition, made up of everyday Maryland citizens who want to see an end to the systemic legislative policies that continuously disrupt the lives of many individuals across the state, mostly people who reside in low income impacted communities.

The Maryland Poor Peoples' Campaign strongly supports House Bill 329 - Public Health - Commission on Health Care. Health care is a human right and should be made available to all individuals, regardless of their ability or inability to pay, and zip code location. Universal Health Care would relieve the burden of expensive out of pocket costs for sick individuals that are eventually left unpaid and turned over to debt collection agencies. This burden can cause people to drain their life savings, negatively affect their ability to borrow (for home ownership, rentals, vehicles) and lead to poverty. It is our belief that Universal Health Care should be equitably distributed across every jurisdiction in the state of Maryland so that Marylanders can receive adequate products and services needed to help them live longer.

The Commission on Universal Health Care is a necessary step in bringing health care to all Marylanders—especially low-wealth and working residents.

With urgency, I ask you to pass HB329 immediately so that it can cross-over to the Senate for passage in the 2023 General Assembly.

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